

# RELIEF IN ACTION

## HURRICANE LAURA

SEPTEMBER 1, 2020



**American  
Red Cross**

### Thousands of Laura Survivors Turn to Red Cross for Critical Aid

Tens of thousands of families are counting on the American Red Cross for crucial assistance after Hurricane Laura dealt a powerful blow to parts of southwestern Louisiana and southeastern Texas last week.

Hurricane Laura pounded coastal communities with intense winds, damaging thousands of homes, knocking down power lines and cutting off access to clean water. While the clouds have cleared, the road to recovery will be long and painful for affected residents – especially amid the COVID-19 pandemic. Critical infrastructure is still out in many places and could be down for months in several parishes in Louisiana.

“Laura is probably gonna go down as one of the strongest storms in [the country’s] history, and that wasn’t the story that was coming out Thursday morning or even Thursday night after landfall,” said Trevor Rigger, Red Cross vice president of Disaster Services.

More than 1,200 trained Red Cross volunteers and employees have deployed virtually or in-person to deliver critical aid to residents devastated by Laura. Along with our partners, we’ve set up drive-thru sites where survivors can pick up food, water and relief supplies. Thousands of people are coming to these sites each day.

“It’s a full force effort from everybody. Everybody’s here, doing what they can,” said Nathan Moscho, a Red Cross volunteer helping with Laura relief efforts. “This one hit, and it hit hard.”



Brian McDaniel of the American Red Cross takes meals to be delivered at a drive-thru distribution point for families affected by Hurricane Laura in Sulphur, Louisiana. SCOTT DALTON/American Red Cross

In addition to the drive-thru sites, the Red Cross is helping support shelters and evacuees placed in hotel rooms. Looking ahead, we are planning to provide shelter for thousands of people per day for several weeks. We’re also receiving a surge in requests for financial aid.

Hurricane Laura was one of the most powerful storms in Louisiana history, and its impact should not be understated. In fact, we project some 300,000 people affected by this disaster could need the Red Cross in the months to come. Powered by our compassionate donors, we can stand with survivors, delivering sorely needed aid, until the job is done.

### Response at a Glance

The American Red Cross is working around the clock to help thousands of people devastated by Hurricane Laura.



More than **69,000**  
**meals and snacks**  
served with partners



More than **20,300**  
**relief items**  
distributed



More than **2,500**  
**individual care**  
**contacts** made

—Cumulative figures as of September 1, 2020



**Thousands of homes** — Early reports indicate that thousands of homes were destroyed or sustained major damage from Hurricane Laura, though damage assessments are still underway. Days later, many survivors have yet to return to see the heart-wrenching destruction for themselves. Some areas are still unreachable, with heavy debris blocking roads. Cameron Parish, Louisiana, shown here, was one of the hardest-hit areas, with some neighborhoods still partially underwater on Sunday. What’s more, Hurricane Laura is the third hurricane to tear through the area in just 15 years. The area was battered by Hurricane Rita in 2005 then again by Hurricane Ike in 2008.

## A Port in the Storm

Cassandra and her 2-month old baby, Chaya, turned to the Red Cross for sheltering in Alexandria, Louisiana, after they were forced to flee their home in Laura’s wake. Ahead of Laura, some 1.5 million people faced some form of evacuation order.

Now, the storm has passed, but recovery is only just beginning. Even for families whose homes were not destroyed, downed utility service means their houses could be unlivable for weeks.



## How You Can Help

Help people affected by Hurricane Laura. Your donation enables the Red Cross to prepare for, respond to and help people recover from this disaster. To donate online, visit [redcross.org/donate](https://www.redcross.org/donate) and select “Hurricane Laura.” To donate by check, write “Hurricane Laura” in the memo line, and mail it to your local Red Cross chapter or to the American Red Cross, P.O. Box 37839, Boone, IA 50037-0839.